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THREE SHARE NOBEL PHYSICS PRIZE FOR BLACK HOLE STUDY

Three scientists on Tuesday won this year's Nobel Prize in physics for advancing the understanding of black holes

UK, GERMAN, AMERICAN SCIENTISTS WIN AWARD

Briton Roger Penrose received half of this year's prize "for the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity". German Reinhard Genzel and American Andrea Ghez received the second half of the prize "for the discovery of a supermassive compact object at the centre of our galaxy", the Nobel Committee said

STILL MANY QUESTIONS UNANSWERED

Black holes are regions of space where gravity is so strong that not even light can escape from them. "These exotic objects pose many questions that beg for answers and motivate future research," said David Haviland, Chair of the Nobel Committee for Physics. Ghez is the fourth woman to get the Physics Nobel | P14

SEK 10 mn

OR \$1.1 MN IS THE PRIZE MONEY, WHICH WILL BE SHARED AMONG THE WINNERS

Cremation in the dead of night to prevent Hathras violence: UP govt

State wants CBI probe under SC watch; bench seeks clarity on witness protection and scope of Allahabad HC proceedings



File photo of police personnel cremating a Dalit woman in the wee hours of September 30 in Hathras district, allegedly without her family's consent | PH

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

FOR the first time since the September 30 cremation of the Hathras gang-rape and murder victim in the dead of the night, allegedly without the consent and presence of her family, the Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday sought to justify its action, saying it was done to prevent large-scale violence the next morning.

Citing intelligence inputs on the possibility of major law and order problems, the UP government, in an affidavit to the Supreme Court, said the cremation happened at 2.30 am and security forces were already on high alert in the district because of the Babri Masjid verdict a day later.

Amid demands for protection to the victim's family, a bench led by Chief Justice of India S A Bobde directed the UP government to submit a fresh affidavit specifying whether it has put in place a witness protection plan for them and other witnesses. The court described the assault as horrible and shocking.

Appearing for the state government, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said, "I am not opposing the petition. There are narratives and narratives in the public domain. Let us not sensationalise the death of a young girl. Investigation

should just be fair and impartial."

In its affidavit, the UP government requested the Supreme Court to order a probe by the CBI under its own supervision into the horrific assault on September 14. In the court, Mehta said: "Your lordships must supervise the investigation and the purpose of it must not be lost."

Senior advocate Indira Jaising said she was on the same page on having a court-monitored probe while seeking protection for the victim's family and ensuring fair investigation.

During the hearing, the bench asked Mehta to clarify whether the victim's family has chosen a lawyer or not. It also sought to know the scope of the suo motu proceedings before the Allahabad High Court in connection with the case. "We want suggestions from all of you as to the scope of the proceedings in Allahabad and how we can widen and make them more relevant," it said while putting off the hearing for next week.

However, seasoned jurists wondered why the SC chose to hear the case in the first place despite the Allahabad High Court having already passed several directions in the matter. The HC ordered several senior police and revenue officers to be present in court on October 12. Also, the court directed that the parents, brothers and sisters of the victim be personally present in court so as to ascertain facts from them directly.

Expressing surprise, Supreme Court lawyer K V Dhannanjay said: "It is unclear why the Supreme Court would interfere or what would be the scope of its interference when a more effective arrangement in uncovering the truth had already been made by the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court."

Echoing him, advocate on record at the Supreme Court Anas Tanvir said, "Supreme Court has, in the past, held that the high courts are better equipped to deal with such matters and have asked the petitioners to approach HCs instead. The same could have been done in present case, more so because the Allahabad HC had already taken suo motu cognisance of the issue." Be that as it may, the UP government's affidavit justifying the cremation said: "The district administration at Hathras had been receiving several intelligence inputs since the morning of September 29 on the manner in which the dharana had taken place at Safdarjung hospital and the whole issue was being exploited and a caste/communal colour was being given."

Apart from the Babri verdict, concerns regarding the coronavirus safety protocol also came into play, it said.

"In such extraordinary and severe circumstances, the district administration took the decision to convince the parents of the deceased to cremate her with all religious rites at night to avoid large-scale violence in the morning to cremate the body of the victim that was lying for almost more than 20 hours after her death and post-mortem," the affidavit stated. It said once the post-mortem had been done, "there cannot be any bad intention" to speed up the cremation "except to obviate the potential violent situation resulting from the planned caste divide by certain vested interests".

No ifs and buts over Nitish, says BJP as allies unwrap deal

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR AND MANISH ANAND @ Patna / New Delhi

TWO days ahead of the close of nominations for the first phase of Bihar assembly polls, the NDA on Tuesday unveiled the seat adjustment plans: the JD-U will contest 122 seats and the BJP, 121. On the alliance's chief ministerial candidate, the two lead partners declared there are no ifs and buts about the leadership of the incumbent, Nitish Kumar.

As per the seat arrangement, the JD-U will adjust the Jitan Ram Manjhi-led Hindustan Awami Morcha (HAM) from its quota while the BJP will leave seats for the Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) of Mukesh Sahini, who exited the opposition Grand Alliance a few days ago. The BJP may end up contesting more seats since it is reportedly negotiating for three-four

seats with the VIP. On the other hand, HAM will get seven seats from the JD-U's share.

Deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi sought to set at rest all doubts over the post-poll leadership issue, saying the NDA will form the government with Nitish in the saddle.

State BJP chief Sanjay Jaiswal went so far as to say the party could write to the Election Commission against the use of names and pictures of the party leaders in poll campaigns by anyone outside the NDA — a clear hint at the LJP, which has announced

to field its candidates against JD-U nominees.

Nitish asserted that there is no misunderstanding in the NDA, and that the alliance is firm on projecting its development plans and achievements before the electorate. To the criticism of his leadership by Chirag Paswan, the CM remained guarded. But he sought to remind the LJP that it was his party that had played a role in sending Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan to the Rajya Sabha.

In a related development, senior BJP leader Rajendra Singh, who had narrowly lost the last elections, joined the LJP. Singh, who is with RSS background, is all set to contest on the LJP ticket against the JD-U nominee.

There are indications that a few of the defeated BJP candidates in the 2015 Assembly elections may also contest from the LJP. **PIO**

BJP releases first list

The BJP named 27 candidates for the three-phase Bihar polls, starting October 28. The list includes international shooter Shreyasi Singh and ex-MP Hari Manjhi, who joined the party on Sunday



Staffer assaulted during CBI raids, DKS tells seer

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

A day after he said CBI officials were more professional than the Enforcement Directorate, following the raids on his properties, KPCC president D K Shivakumar told Spatikapuri Mutt seer Nanjavadhoota Swami that a personal staffer of his was roughed up during the raids.

However, responding to queries by *TNIE* later, Shivakumar said that he was only informed about his staffer being roughed up by officials, but was yet to get more details about it. When asked if those who allegedly assaulted the staffer were officials of the CBI or Bengaluru police, Shivakumar added that he will not make public comments about the incident, lest it lead to "unfortunate outcomes".

"I do not want a repeat of what happened to G Parameshwara's staff. I am getting more details about what happened and wouldn't want to talk about it in public," he said. Parameshwara's staffer Ramesh had committed suicide in 2019 following a raid on the Congress leader's properties. **P4**

TODAY'S IPL MATCH
KOLKATA VS CHENNAI
ODDS: KKR 22/23 | CSK 10/11
LIVE: STAR SPORTS / HOTSTAR @ 7.30 PM

APPOINTMENT

Dinesh Kumar Khara is new SBI Chairman

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE Centre on Tuesday appointed Dinesh Kumar Khara as the next Chairman of State Bank of India (SBI) for three years with effect from Wednesday as the three-year term of Rajnish Kumar came to an end on Tuesday.

Khara, 56, is one of the four managing directors of SBI who were interviewed for the top post by the Banks Board Bureau.

As per convention, the SBI Chairman is appointed from a pool of serving managing directors at the bank.

Interestingly, Khara's name was recommended by the BBB in 2017 as well but he lost to Rajnish Kumar.

A Masters in Business Administration from FMS Delhi, he joined SBI as a probationary officer in 1984 where he served in various capacities and played a major role in merging SBI with its five associate banks and the Bharatiya Mahila Bank with SBI.

The appointment comes at a time when the banking sector is facing the challenges of loan moratorium, rising non-performing assets and shrinking credit.

India pokes China from quad meet

PUSHKAR BANAKAR @ New Delhi

IN a subtle message to China, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday said India believes in respecting territorial integrity and peaceful resolution of disputes. Addressing a meeting of the foreign ministers of Australia, Japan and the US in Tokyo, he said India is "committed to upholding the rules-based international order".

The US-India-Australia-Japan quadrilateral consultations come amid growing concerns over Chinese aggression in the Indo-Pacific region and India-China border tension in eastern Ladakh.

Beijing is opposed to the 'quad' grouping, which it says was set up to contain China's 'development' in the region.

In an apparent reference to China, Jaishankar said, "The fact that we are meeting here today, in person, despite the glo-

bal pandemic, is a testimony to the importance that these consultations have gained, particularly in recent times."

The meet was also attended by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne, and Japan's Toshimitsu Motegi. Jaishankar said as vibrant and pluralistic democracies with shared values, nations have collectively affirmed the importance of maintaining a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

"Our objective remains advancing the security and the economic interests of all countries having legitimate and vital interests in the region."

Jaishankar also had a one-on-one meeting with Pompeo. The two leaders discussed various aspects of bilateral ties and measures to enhance cooperation. "Began my Tokyo visit

with a bilateral meeting with @SecPompeo. Pleased to see the progress of our partnership in so many fields. Will work together for stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific," Jaishankar tweeted.

A statement from the US Department of States said Pompeo and Jaishankar discussed ongoing bilateral and multilateral cooperation on topics of international concern. "They reaffirmed the strength of the US-India relationship, reviewed efforts to combat the pandemic, and asserted the need to work

together to advance peace, prosperity and security in the Indo-Pacific and around the world," it said.

The leaders agreed to continue close cooperation during the US-India 2+2 ministerial dialogue later this year.

Subrahmanyam Jaishankar

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Social distance for bypolls, only 50 per rally

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

WITH the state going for its first election amidst the pandemic, the State Election Commission officials are making elaborate arrangements to ensure that the candidates, their supporters and people attending rallies follow SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures). The officials have warned that criminal cases will be booked against those violating the Model Code of Conduct and SOPs.

Speaking to *The New Indian Express*, Chief Electoral Officer Sanjiv Kumar said rallies, attended by only 50 people, will be allowed at designated places. He said this is applicable for the bypolls at Sira in Tumakuru and RR Nagar in Bengaluru.

The respective district Deputy Commissioners have to identify places in the constituencies where public speeches can be

allowed and there is no restriction on the number of such places in each constituency.

For the first time, those attending the election rallies have to stand in circles drawn by the officials to ensure social distancing. Officials will draw a circle or square to ensure that not more than 50 people are present at the rallies.

Sanjiv Kumar said like in other elections, they

have videographers who will record public speeches and other proceedings. "If there are more people, we will get to know as there will be record proof, this will be a violation of SOPs. Action can be taken accordingly," he added.

The Election Commission of India had recently issued guidelines for the electoral process, which includes face masks/shields, sanitizers, thermal scanners, gloves, and PPE kits.

CONTINUED ON: P7

It's official: Bengaluru will have 243 wards

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

THREE days after the government issued a gazette notification on the amendments to the Karnataka Municipalities Act, setting the stage for delimitation of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) wards, it has been decided that the civic body will now have 243 wards based on the population, against the present 198.

The chairman of the joint legislature committee on restructuring of BBMP, MLA S Raghu, told *The New Indian Express* that the decision was taken at a meeting with the Chief Secretary, Urban Development Department Additional Chief Secretary and the BBMP Commissioner on Tuesday.

He explained that the October 3 notification mentioned that the number of wards can be increased to anywhere between 225 and 250. "With the population size of each ward as 35,000, we arrived at the number 241. But, since the size of families can vary, it was decided that there will be 243 wards," he said.

CONTINUED ON: P2